

Assessment of The Education of Students with Visual Impairment In The Integrated Primary Schools of Debre Markos Town Administration.

1.Yitayal Alemu and, 2.Belachew Zergaw

1. Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education
Faculty of Education, University of Gondar/ Gondar, Ethiopia

2. Department of Special need Education,
Faculty of Education, Debre Markos Teachers College, Ethiopia

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to assess the education of students with visual impairment in terms of their service provision, academic achievement and the learning teaching process in the integrated primary schools of DebreMarkos town Administration. The study was conducted at two integrated primary schools of DebreMarkos town namely Dibza and Nigus T/haymanot. The participants of the study were 15 students with visual impairment, 10 Special Needs Education teachers, 42 regular teachers and 150 regular students with a total of 217 participants in the two sample schools. Purposive, availability and stratified sampling techniques were used to draw the sample participants. Questionnaire was used to collect the data from the selected participants. Quantitative research approach was employed. Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation analyzing techniques were used to analysis the data. From the collected and analyzed data the following results were emerged students with visual impairment had negative opinion towards their integration, the service provision provided to those students with visual impairment was limited, regular teachers did not get any kind of in -service training in handling the learning needs of students with visual impairment, the availability of resources and special equipment's, resource personnel and support services were very limited. The school physical environment was not conducive for students with visual impairment, the assessment and evaluation practices used by the teachers was full of challenges. Based on the findings conclusions were drawn and recommendations were also forwarded. To improve the academic achievement of students with visual impairment, regular and special needs education teachers and students with visual impairment should be exposed to mobility orientation training, braille reading and writing training, school principals should plan for both schools and out school training, the government should take in to consideration for the needs of students with visual impairment.

Key Words: Students with Visual Impairment, Integrated Primary Schools, Equipment and Regular and Special Need Education Teachers.

Introduction

The Concept and International Views of Visual Impairment

Visual impairment is the umbrella concept encompassing all degrees of visual loss. It is used to mean persons whose vision loss constitutes a significant limitation to perform tasks that require sight. Persons with visual impairment can be categorized into two groups' namely blind and low vision. Blind refers to a high degree of vision loss such that any residual vision is not useable in performing visual tasks. Low vision refers to a severe visual impairment whereby the affected person is necessarily limited to distance vision but also unable to read a newspaper at a normal viewing position or other reading material even with correction. Thus, for the purposes of this work, the term 'visual impairment' will be used generically to refer to all forms of vision loss ranging from blindness to low vision. Such children may require Braille or non-visual materials for their learning. Visual impairment is the one and the major form of disability. The number of people with visual impairments in the world is estimated to be 285 million, of which 39 million are blind and 246 million having low vision (WHO,

2010). The total population with visual impairment in Africa was estimated to be 26,300,000 or 3.26% of the total population. The African region constitutes 15% of the world's people with visual impairment. Other statistical sources indicate that, only less than 1% of children with disabilities have got access to primary education worldwide (Mengesha, 2016).

As to the estimation of the Ministry of Education, 1.5 to 3 million school-aged children which includes learners with visual-impairment in Ethiopia need special needs education (MoE, 2006). And around 60,789 learners with special educational needs are attending school. Out of the data, 55,492 are in primary schools, 4,543 are in secondary schools and the remaining 754 learners are attending their preparatory schools. Again of the total number of learners with special educational needs, 7,911 are learners with visual impairment. The statistics shows that out of the 7,911 learners with visual impairment, 7,016 are enrolled in primary schools, 640 are in their secondary schools and the rest 255 are in their preparatory schools. Accordingly, it is expected that by making different arrangements, children with visual impairments are taught as done to their sighted peers. Sometimes they may need direct teaching to learn many of the things that their sighted peers could learn incidentally.

The Effect of Visual Impairment

The effect of visual impairment on the students' education depends on the severity, type of loss, the age at which the condition appears, and the overall functioning level of the child. Child with visual impairments may have difficulty grasping abstract ideas and concepts that depends on visual stimuli (MoE2012).

Visual impairment may affect the development of concepts, mobility, orientation to an area, abstract learning, relationships with peers, self-esteem, and access to many elements of educational, vocational and recreational living that the sighted world takes for granted. Children with visual impairments often have talents that they will be unable to develop without guidance to help them learn by using different sensory modes. Early intervention with these children is critical to help them develop their talents (Carney, and others. 2003).

According to Carney et al (2003:6) cited in Kassie (2013) stated that "students with visual impairments sometimes have limited natural learning experiences because they are not able to observe objects and interactions. They also added that "the areas of learning which are particularly affected due to visual limitation are: concept development; interpersonal communication skills; life skills; orientation and mobility skills; and academic development."

Concept of Integration and Integrated Education

Integration is the placement of children with disability a similar term is mainstreaming but not necessarily the identical treatment condition for both. Integration" in its widest usage entails a process of making whole, of combining different elements into a unit. As used in special education, it refers, to the education of pupils with special needs in ordinary schools. Integration provides a "natural" environment where these pupils are together with their peers, are free from the isolation that is characteristics of much special school placement (Tirussew 2005).

Educational integration means that the disabled and non-disabled children and students are studying together, which enables them to get to know each other, to be together in one room during the classes and the leisure time activities in order to become familiar with each other (Asrat, 2016). Integration emphasizes that all children and students can learn. It requires identifying barriers that hinder learning, and reducing or removing these barriers in schools, vocational training, higher education, teacher education, and education management. Its key Emphasis was on universalizing access and promoting equity for disadvantaged groups with special attention on removing educational disparities (ibid). In its broadest sense integrated education refers to the process of educating children with special needs in regular class rooms whenever the placement best fits their particular learning/social needs (Banbury and Fox, cited in Tirusew 2005). Integration education has both advantages and disadvantages in its implementations. From the advantage side, it has support of social learning and social involvement in hearing and visual society, it also elimination of minorities segregation, the children become more tolerant to each other, when they are learning together. This in

turn helps to shape their future life in the society. From disadvantages, its setting requires special service (integration into non-special schools and classes) is much more expensive because of special equipment, teachers who have the knowledge of sign language should be hired for translation purpose, the other problem is lack of social preparation and information about the handicapped of the teachers and children and children with hearing & visual impairment and their families have additional requirements to implement educational integration successfully (ibid).

However the present scenario of the educational system in Ethiopia does not lead to full inclusion (Tirusew, 2005). Among others, children with visual & hearing impairment may only need some time to spend outside the regular class room to receive special educational support. With regard to deaf children special arrangements should be made. According to Vision Ethiopia (2014) most deaf children teachers in Ethiopia are not trained sign language, no interpreter available in the regular school setting. Thus academic is severely stifled. Therefore in order to develop and achieve mastery in sign language, the deaf child have access to interactive sign language environment as early as possible.

More over the case may be need for research about to implement effective inclusive education for these children. Based on the present conditions of the education of children with hearing and visual impairment in Ethiopia and the experience of other African countries useful suggested components may lead to successful integrated Education (Tirusew, 2005).

Teachers' Qualification and Trainings

Teachers are the most important factor in determining the quality of education a child receives. The quality of education and training largely depend on the quality of teachers that is academic qualification, professionals training, commitment and dedication. Because teaching is a highly skilled profession, requiring dedicated training not only in subject knowledge, but in teaching skills – including identifying strengths, weaknesses and interests and responding to diverse learning needs, classroom management, positive discipline and attitudes.

Successful inclusion requires there to be sufficient teachers, who are adequately prepared and trained, and who are supported to work in inclusive ways with specialist teaching support where necessary. As Reynolds and Fletcher (2007:346) cited in Sisana Susan (2014) argue that teachers need certain skills and knowledge that will help them teach children with special needs, so they need to know what they should do in order to enhance the learning process. However many teachers, including head teachers, do not even know they are required to teach children with disabilities.

According to Article 4 of the CPRD (2012) Ethiopia is obliged to employ teachers who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille and to train professionals and staff who work at all level of education in order to help ensure the realization of the right to education for CWDs. But in Ethiopia, in addition to the shortage of teachers, some existing teachers are not qualified for the grade levels they teach. Thus the practice shows that CPRD obligation is far from being discharged (Lakech 2006).

Provision of Resource and Specialized Equipment

Teaching resources and materials as well as school facilities are part of the contributing factors in supporting integrated practices. Learners with hearing and visual impairment like others require basic support services for learning to be effective in the integrated setting. A successful inclusion of special needs pupils “depends not only on appropriate organization, legislation and regulations, but also on the availability of resources in the regular classroom and on the way teachers differentiate the resources between pupils” Pijil, Mijer and Hegarty (1997) cited in (Kassie 2013).

In this case, materials and equipment provision and financial sources are among the frontiers of challenge in the implementation of integrated education. When a school is well equipped with the basic teaching and learning materials, the teacher's job is made easier and the learning outcomes of all learners will improve. Resources like Braille paper, slates, and stylus, Brail library service, books written in Braille, tape recorder, audio cassettes, and audio books are important to visually impaired learners to supplement their special educational needs. However studies made by Kassie (2013), in

Ethiopia and William (2009) in Uganda indicated that resources for learners with special educational needs are scarce.

The School Physical Environment

Physical access to school buildings is an essential prerequisite for educating children with disabilities (Stubbs. S 2008). According to Martha, et al (2014) cited in Aderie (2016), the school's physical environment refers to the buildings, grounds and equipment in and surrounding the school such as: the building design and location; the provision of natural light and adequate shade; the creation of space for physical activity and facilities for learning and healthy eating. Aderie(2016) observed that the availability and accessibility of the physical facilities of school assist in enhancing the learning or educational outcomes of all students including those with impairments and special needs. Hence, the quality and standard of education both curricula and co-curricular activities offered in a school should be mainly determined by provision, adequacy, utilization and management of educational physical facilities. However, schools that do not have good or adequate physical facilities do not produce good results, and/or produce students with low levels of learning (ibid). A positive learning environment is necessary for student's with hearing & visual impairment to experience success in an inclusive educational setting. Bishop (1997) claims that before these students can be successfully included, it is essential that the school atmosphere is welcoming.

In Ethiopia unfortunately the notation of physical accessibility does not appear to have a long history. Hence physical structures or information services are hardly disability friendly (CPRD, 2012) part two. With regard to physical barriers, school infrastructure and transportation services are not typically accessible in Ethiopia (USAID 2012). Due to this fact CWDs including students with visual impairment are often excluded from educational services (ibid). Studies also briefs that physical and architectural barriers are playing a significance role in limiting the mobility of CWDs in school compound as well as in class rooms in Ethiopia.

Support Services

Support services are an important aspect in inclusion. Apart from regular and other teachers who have training on special needs education, the successful education of CWDs requires the involvement of different professionals who assist in identification, referral, diagnosis, treatment and provision of appropriate educational and related services. To realize full participation of hearing and visual impairment students in the regular school setting a multi sectorial coordination service is required. According to (MOE 2012) point out that, technical support parental support, peer support, community support, teacher –aid support, guidance and counseling are some importance support services that should be made available to the learner with special needs in the regular class.

Assessment and Evaluation Practices

As FDRE (1995), in education the term “assessment” refers generally to the gathering and interpretation of information related to a student's learning abilities, learning attainments, learning strengths, and learning needs. School assessment and evaluation processes include weekly, monthly or end-of-term tests as well as the assessment and evaluation procedures carried out for specific purposes (ibid). These in- school assessment and evaluation processes are very useful means for the measurement of students' progress and achievement, and provide valuable information for use in planning for teaching and learning

The system of student assessment and evaluation is another important aspect of integrated education. Teachers should ensure that the methods used for assessing students with special educational needs are appropriate and that they do not create barriers to inclusion. However conducting educational assessments of students who are hearing and visually impaired can be challenging for several reasons. For example, With regard to hearing impairment Cawthon, 2009; Gilbertson & Ferre, 2008, cited in Ferrell, Bruce & Luckner (2014) claims that (a) students who are deaf or hard of hearing sometimes master the academic content; however, their abilities to demonstrate their knowledge may be compromised because of communication, language, reading, and writing delays

(b) norm-referenced tests may cause problems for students who are deaf or hard of hearing because tests require reading ability for assessing skills other than reading, and test scores may reflect reading skill deficits rather than students' content knowledge. Related to visually impaired children assessment made is more difficult because there are no reliable and valid instruments. Bowen & Ferrell, 2003; Ferrell, 2011; Groenveld & Jan, 1992; L. Hunt, 2001; J. C. Miller & Skilman, 2003; Singh, 2004 cited in Ferrell, Bruce, & Luckner (2014). Thus, the results of an assessment are, at best, considered an underestimate of performance. Although in the process of teaching and learning it is common to use class work, homework and examinations but these can pose considerable difficulty for the students with hearing & visual impairment. In such practice teachers should know how to apply these addressing the needs of learners with hearing & visual impairment.

Teachers Opinion on Integrated Education

The UNESCO (2005) on teachers view on integrated education points out that, countries where teachers favor education for all children in ordinary classroom, have a law requiring that, but in countries offering sophisticated segregated education, teachers are not in favor of integrated education. Teachers are key implementers of any education policy and their perception is very vital towards success or failure of the policy. In Latin America a study pointed some of the barriers to integrated education as teachers' low perception of students with visual & hearing impairment and unwillingness to meet their diverse needs of learning.

Methods

In this study a descriptive survey design was employed. This is because the study aims at to investigate accurate description on the experience of students with hearing and visual impairment in the integrated primary schools. One approach of data collection was used in this study. That was quantitative methods. In this study, Teachers qualification & training, resources availability, the school physical environment, the assessment and evaluation practices and service provision are the independent variables. Integration of students with hearing and visual impairment as a factor of enhancing the academic performance & providing educational services in integrated primary school is the dependent variable.

The target populations for this study were special needs & regular teachers, regular students, students with visual impairment in Debeza and Nigus T/haymanot integrated primary schools which practice integrated education in DeberMarkos town Administration. In the main study out of the 12, primary schools in DeberMarkos town, 2 integrated primary schools of which Debeza and Nigus Teklehaymanot were purposively selected. Because they are the only experienced integrated primary schools practicing integrated education in the town. Out of 69 regular teachers in the sample schools who teach grade 5-8, 42 of them were purposively selected to participate in the main study based on the class allotment found from the school director that they teach students with disabilities in the integrated primary school setting. Similarly 15 students with Visual Impairment by using availability sampling technique were selected. Because these students are fully experienced in the integrated school and will give more in-depth information on their experience and the challenges that they faced during their stay in the school.

10 special needs education teachers were selected through availability sampling methods. Because, these teachers having knowledge on inclusive education and they can give in-depth information on the existing and ongoing experiences of students with hearing and visual impairment in their respective school. Finally out of 1,753 classmates of students with disabilities in the mainstream class setting (grade 5-8), 150 students were selected through stratified sampling method based on their grade level. After the sample size has been decided on simple random sampling technique for regular student participants was drawn from each selected schools to fill the questionnaire.

Questionnaire was the data collecting instrument to be employed in order to answer the questions raised. Open-ended questionnaires were administered to regular teachers and students to investigate information on service provision, environmental accessibility, teachers' qualification and

challenges students with hearing and visual impairment have faced, and their suggestion the measures to be taken in order to minimize the problems.

Since this study was conducted using a descriptive survey research design quantitative data analysis techniques was used. As to the quantitative data completeness and consistency of the returned questionnaires were checked, sorted and categorized in to major themes. These categorized data were coded by using the same digit number. The coded data were treated using an excel spread sheet and SPSS 16.0(statistical Package for Social Science).The analyzed data were presented in the form of frequency, mean, standard division and percentages to describe and interpret the response.

Results

Educational Service Provisions for Students with Visual Impairment in Integrated Schools

Table 1.Training of teachers in relation braille writing and reading

Training Type	Schools		Frequency	Percentage
Do you get the chance to participate in Braille Writing and reading training?	Debeza	Yes	1	8.3 %
		No	11	91.7 %
	Nigus T/haymanot	Yes	1	3.4 %
		No	28	96.4%

In table 1,11(91.7%) of teachers at Debeza and 28(96.4%) of teachers at Nigus T/haymanot integrated primary schoolshad never get the chance to participate in braille writing and reading training while only 1(8.3%) of teachers in Debza and 1(3.4%) of teachers in Nigus T/haymanot integrated primary schools had attended such in-service training.

Table2. Regular teachers' perception on the availability of educational support for students with Visual Impairment.

			Agree	uncertain	Disagree	Total
Educational supports for students with visual impairment are availability	Debeza	N	1	2	9	12
		%	8.3	16.7	75	100
	Nigus T/hayma	N	2	7	20	29
		%	6.9	24.1	69	100

Educational support is very important issue to be effective for availability of educational support for students with visual impairment. Due to this end, the respondents were asked about the availability of educational support. By analyzing the collected data from the participants both the selected schools were not well equipped with different educational support services. Results showed in table 2 75 % of the teachers in Debeza integrated primary school and 69% of teachers in Nigus T/haymanot integrated primary school suggested that different educational support services were not available for students with visual impairment in order to make their education effective. Only 8.3% of respondent teachers in Debeza and 6.9 % of the respondents in Nigus T/haymanot integrated schools agreed that different educational support services were available for students with visual impairment to make their education effective. The rest 6.9% and 24.1% of respondents in Debeza and Nigus T/haymanot integrated schools respectively responded to uncertain.

According to the findings of this study, the availability of different educational services to students with visual impairment in both schools were limited. This was an indication that the provisions of different educational services for students with visual impairment need improvement to make the education of students with visual impairment effective.

Availability of Resources and Special Equipment for Students with Visual Impairment

Table 3. Availability and use of various resources and equipment for Students with Visual Impairment (n =41) reported by regular teachers in both schools.

Resources and equipment	Available		Not available	
	F	%	F	%

Adequate Braille paper & stationary materials	28	68.3	13	31.7
Slate and styles	23	56	18	44
White cane	24	58.5	17	41.5
Text books written in Braille	20	48.8	21	51.2
Portable -note taking device	10	24.4	31	75.6
Cassettes and tape recorders	9	21	32	79
Auditory out puts (like audio books, talking calculators,clock, etc.)	4	8	37	92
Tactile graphic images	9	21	32	79
Computers with jaws soft ware	7	17	34	83

As it can be seen from the above table major resources and equipment for students with visual impairment were, stationery materials, writing and reading devices, recording materials, auditory out puts, tactile graphic images and computers with jaws software. The findings of this study also shows that most available resource and equipment were included; Braille paper and stationary materials (68.3%), followed by slate and stylus (56%), followed by white cane (58.5%). According to this study, the most available resource and equipment were Braille paper & stationary materials, slates and styles and white cane. However, several other important resources and equipment were either very low or limited. The least available equipment were auditory out puts (like audio books, talking calculators, clock, etc.).

Availability and Use of Resource Personnel to Students with Visual Impairment

Table 4. Shows different resource personnel used in regular primary schools to SWHI

Resource Personnel	Available		not available	
	F	%	F	%
Volunteer Reader	11	27	30	73
Exam Reader	27	65.9	14	34.1
Counselor	10	24.4	31	75.6
Different Therapists	9	21	32	79

Table 4. Shows availability and use of various resource personnel for SWVI as stated by participant teacher. Findings of the study indicated that most of the resource personnel required to make SWVI learn with the sighted learners was not available. As can be seen table 4.3.2b, 79 % of teachers stated that there were not different therapists available in the integrated schools. 75.5% of teachers reported that there was no counseling service provide to students with visual impairment in the integrated school because of lack of counselor. Followed by this 73 %of the respondents stated that there was no any volunteer reader organized by the school authorities to support the education of Students with Visual Impairment in the integrated school. Only 65.9% of the respondents reported the availability of exam readers and scribes. According to this study, the most available resource personnel were exam reader.

Availability and use of support services for Students with Visual Impairment

Table 5support services availability and use for Students with Visual Impairment as responded by regular teachers of Debza and Nigus T/haymanot (n = 41)

Kinds of Support Services	Response			
	Available		Nnot available	
	F	%	F	%
Braille Library Service	14	34.1	27	65.9
Training on How to Use Computers	6	14.6	35	85.4
Braille Reading and Writing Training	11	27	30	73
Auditory Training	7	17	34	83.
Orientation and Mobility Training	2	4.9	39	95.1
Different Therapy Services	9	21	32	79

Table 5 shows different support services were not available and used for Students with Visual Impairment in regular primary schools as stated by integrated class teachers. The findings of this study revealed that majority (95.1%) of the teachers respond that orientation and mobility training service was not given to SWVI in their school. This was followed by absence of computer trainings indicated by 85.4% of the respondent teachers. This was followed by the absence of auditory training indicated by 83% of the respondent teachers. And again this was followed by the absence of different therapy services to SWVI indicated by 79 % of the teachers. 73% of the teachers reported that there were not available Braille reading and writing training service to SWVI. The absence of braille library service was reported by 65.9 % of the respondent teachers in both schools. According to the findings of this study, students with visual impairment didn't get support services in the major areas.

Accessibility of the School Physical Environment

Learning institutions are required to create a conducive learning environment for the success of their students and effectiveness of their programs as far as their capacity allows. Students with disabilities require special attention since the environment itself creates additional barriers for them because of their impairments. Students with disabilities should be provided with assistive technologies, other resources, and other types of support to facilitate their learning.

Table 6 participants' perceptions on the appropriateness of the school physical environment for Students with Visual Impairment. (N =12, Debeza Primary school), (N=29, N/T/haymanot Primary School).

Appropriateness of the school physical environment for Students with Visual Impairment.			Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
	Debeza	N	2	3	7	12
		%	16.7	25	58.3	100
	N/T/haymanot	N	3	2	24	29
		%	10.3	6.9	82.8	100

As it can be seen from table 6 only 16.7% and 10.3% of respondent teachers from Debeza and N/Tekelehaymanot primary schools respectively agreed that the school offers an appropriate, safe and stimulating environment for all students with hearing and/or visual impairment creating a sense of belonging and security. However, the majority 58.3% and 82.8% of participant teachers from Debeza and N/T/haymanot integrated primary schools respectively disagreed that the school offers an appropriate, safe and stimulating environment for all students with hearing and/or visual impairment creating a sense of belonging and security and 25% and 6.9 % of the respondent teachers from Debeza and N/T/haymanot integrated primary schools respectively responded uncertain.

Analysis of Data Gathered from Regular Student Participants Teachers Training

Table 4.5.1a Regular students' perception about the absence of teachers training and its effect on the academic achievement of Students with Visual Impairment

		Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
Debeza	N	46	8	1	55
	%	83.6	14.5	1.8	100
Nigus T/haymanot	N	76	8	9	93
	%	81.7	8.6	9.7	100

Participant students were asked to give their suggestion on the absence of teacher training and its effect on the academic achievement of students with hearing and/or visual impairment. As it can be seen from table 4.5.1a, 83.6% of students from Debeza and 81.7% of students from Nigus T/haymanot integrated primary schools agreed with the absence of teacher training in SNE affects the academic achievement of students with hearing and/or visual impairment the integrated classroom setting.

However, 14.5% of students from Debeza and 8.6% of students from Niguse T/haymanot integrated primary school disagreed that the absence of teacher training in SNE affect the academic achievement of students with hearing and/or visual impairment the integrated classroom setting. The rest 1.8 % and 9.7% of the respondents from Debeza and Nigus T/haymanot integrated primary schools, did not sure whether it affects or not.

Table 7 Perception of Students' on Teachers Training

Items	Rate			Total
	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
Most integrated class room teachers do not have knowledge and skills to support Students with Visual Impairment	118(79)	12(8.1)	18(12.2)	148(100)
Teaches who trained in SNE hope confidence in supporting students with visual impairment in the integrated classroom setting than untrained teachers	92(62.2)	30(20.3)	26(17.5)	148(100)

As table 7 shows sample unites were asked about the integrated classroom teacher skill to support students with visual impairment. Participants of this study were asked to give an opinion that most integrated classroom teachers do not have knowledge and skill to support SWH and/VI. As it can be seen table in 4.5.1b, 79% of the students agreed with the statement, while 12.2 % of them disagreed with the statement and 8.1% of them stated uncertain.

Regular Students View on the Provision of Support Services and Accessibility of Resources

Table 8 Regular student's views on the provision of support services and availability of resources

No	Items	Rate			total
		Agree	uncertain	disagree	
		N(%)	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
9	Students in this school do their best to help Students with Visual Impairment	26(17.6)	9(6.8)	113(76.4)	148(100)
11	There is co-ordination b/n special unit and regular teachers in order to teach Students with Visual Impairment in the integrated class room setting	10(6.8)	14(9.4)	124(83.8)	148(100)
12	In your school ,different educational services are adequately available for students with hearing and/or visual impairment in order to make their education effective	10(6.8)	11(7.4)	127(85.8)	148(100)
13	In your school , all students with hearing /visual impairment have text books and other special learning materials that much their educational needs	14(9.5)	5(3.4)	129(87.1)	148(100)
14	The type and availability of resources and special equipment used by the regular teachers in the integrated class are more appropriate to students with hearing impairment than those for visual impairment	86(58.1)	20(13.5)	42(28.4)	148(100)
15	The school offers an appropriate ,safe and stimulating environment for all students with hearing and/or visual impairment creating a	6(4.1)	8(5.4)	134(90.5)	148(100)

	sense of belonging and security				
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Support services play a key role in inclusion of Children with Disabilities. The above responses indicated that the sighted and hearing students did not do their best to support those students with visual impairment. The majority (76.4%) of regular students disagreed that students do their best in their school to help Students with Visual Impairment .Only (17.6%) of the students agree they did their best to help their impaired peers. Teamwork is one of the factors which enhance success in any organization. Working in teams in the teaching profession facilitates the spirit of togetherness and fosters academic excellence among the learners, particularly students with visual impairment. However, by the time of this study it was observed that many of the regular teachers were no co-ordination with the special unit teachers to teach Students with Visual Impairment. The responses showed that 83.8% of the students stated that there was not any coordination between the special unit teachers and regular teachers in the case of teaching Students with Visual Impairment in their class. Only 6.8% of the students agree on the presence of their co-ordination.

In this study 85.8% of regular students reported that there was not any educational provision to Students with Visual Impairment to make their education effective. Only 6.8% agreed that their school provided different educational services to Students with Visual Impairment to make their education effective. While 7.4 % of the respondents reported uncertain.

On the issue of availability of resources like text books and other learning special materials to Students with Visual Impairment that did not support for much their learning needs, most of the pupils 87.1% stated that their school had not adequate resources and other learning materials support that much the learning needs of Students with Visual Impairment while 9.8% agreed that their school offers text books and other special learning materials for Students with Visual Impairment that much their learning needs. However, the availability of such resources is very important during teaching and learning process .In the case of the appropriateness, availability and types of resources used by the regular teachers in the integrated classroom setting the majority 58.1 % of regular students agreed that the type and availability of resources were more appropriate to SWHI than SWVI, while 28.4% of the students disagreed that the resources were not appropriate to Students with Visual Impairment.

In this study most of the respondents 90.5% stated that their school was not offered an appropriate, safe and stimulating environment for all students with hearing and/or visual impairment creating a sense of belonging and security. Only 4.1 % agreed that their school offered an appropriate, safe and stimulating environment for all students with hearing and/or visual impairment. While, 5.4% of the students responded to this issue uncertain.

Table 9 Regular students perception on the assessment methods that used by integrated class room teachers

		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Debeza	N	7	5	43	55
	%	12.7	9.7	78.2	100
NigusT/h	N	5	10	78	93
	%	5.4	10.8	83.9	100

Participants of regular students were asked to rate regular teachers whether they use appropriate assessment and evaluation methods including home work to evaluate the academic performance of all students in the integrated classroom setting. Regarding to this, most of the respondents 78.2% of Debeza Primary School students and 83.9% of NiguseTekeleHaymanot Primary School respondents disagreed that teachers in the integrated class room were not use appropriate assessment and evaluation methods. Only 12.7% of Debza primary school students and 5.4% of

NigusTekeleHaymanot Primary School participant students claimed that their teachers were used appropriate assessment and evaluation methods regardless of their individual needs and disability type.

Discussion

What is found?

Primary school service provisions to promote the integration of Students with Visual Impairment

The study pointed out that (91.7%) and (96.4%) of the participants in both integrated schools assured that they have never get the chance of participating in braille writing and reading training. In addition to this, the National Mathematics Advisory Panel reports (2008) cited in William (2009) stated that because of having knowledge and skill gap, integrated school teachers face difficult challenges to meet the needs of every student to master the content of all core subject areas.

Ethiopia signed different agreements related with students with special needs and ESDPV also give attention for those like students. According to (CPRD(2012), Ethiopia is obligated to employ teachers who are qualified in sign language and/or braille to train professionals and staffs who work at all level of education in order to help the realization of the right to education for CWDs (including students with visual impairment). But, the present study indicated that the majority of integrated class room teachers have chronic problems related with Braille reading and writing skills and also they never attained any kind of in-service training to help students with visual impairment in the integrated class room setting. In general, the finding of the study in this issue was the same with other scholars advocated and researched.

Teachers Training Related with Supporting Students with Visual Impairment

Continuous professional development in different issues is very important for teachers because teacher is the most important asset for the teaching learning process to assure quality education. As Reynolds and Fletcher(2007:346)cited in Sisana Susan (2014)claimed that teachers need certain skills and knowledge that will help them teach children with special needs (including students with visual impairment),so they need to Know what they should in order to enhance the learning process. The finding of theses study indicated that all (100%) of regular teachers who taught in the integration class room had a diploma in education.

While the majority 66.7% of regular teachers in Debeza integrated primary school and 69% of regular teachers in Negus T/haymanot integrated school had never attended in-service training to support students with visual impairment, including teaching them. Only 33.3% and 24.1% of Debeza and Neguse T/haymanot integrated class room teachers respectively had attended in-service training in any form of induction or orientation regarding to teaching students with hearing and/ visual impairment. The finding of the study was similar with the pervious researches. A study conducted by Asrat (2014) indicated that lack of teachers trained in SNE seriously challenged in addition to this the study conducted by Mut,J.M (2010) also pointed out that teachers in kenya also suffered by lack of training to develop their skills and knowledge in handling students with students with visual impairment

Availability of Resources and Special Equipment.

The unavailability of essential resources and special equipment like visual supplements (like video recording and descriptive videos etc.), overhead projectors and Class room captioning and other resources. This finding showed that lack of adequate facilities and materials were obstacles to effective learning of students with visual impairment. Different scholars like Ohuche (1978) and Ale (1989) point out that poor facilities, equipment and instructional materials were adduced for poor academic performance of students with hearing impairment.

Important resources and equipment like Braille text books, Portable -note taking device, Cassette and tape recorders, Auditory out puts (like audio books, talking calculators,clock, etc.),

Tactile graphic images and Computers with jaws software were either very low or totally absent. The finding of this study supported by the finding of other researches like Kimokoa J.(2014)which indicated that there were no or a few learning materials like braille text books, Perkins Braille machines, pens, computer, talking calculators and books. Likewise, appropriate resources and special equipment can “enhance success in the school curriculum and...aid communication, mobility and learning” (UNESCO, 1994, p. 23). Resources and special equipment offers students with visual impairment increased learning opportunities, which promotes a sense of inclusion (Palmer, 1995 cited in Nimmo,S(2008). With appropriate resources and special equipment, these individuals can achieve curricular success and compete with their sighted peers (Allan & Stiteley, 2006; American Foundation for the Blind, 2005a; Glodowski, 2006) cited in ibid.

Availability Resource Personnel

Counseling services are very important in the learning environment, especially for students with visual impairment. Furthermore, the researcher added that providing the support to the individual learner promotes his/her participation in the teaching and learning process. As MoE (2012) declared that apart from regular and other teachers who have training on special needs education, the successful education of CWDS (including students with visual impairment) requires the involvement of different professionals who assist in provision of educational appropriate educational and related services.

Availability of Support Services

Findings of this study revealed that services like therapy, braille reading and writing training, library services were not available for students with visual impairment. This was indicated by the, 79%, 73% and 65% of the respondent teachers in both Dibza and Nigus T/haymanotschools respectively. (McCall 1999 cited in Nimmo, S. 2008) notes “the development of skills in reading and writing through Braille is a key part of the entitlement of students with visual impairment and well-developed Braille skills are essential if the student is to be able to access the curriculum” (p. 38). Being able to read without reliance on technology fosters independence (Student Support Services, 2001 cited in ibid).

5. School Conducive Environment

According to Martha, Lawrence, Ian and Claire (2014) the school's physical environment refers to the buildings, grounds and equipment in and surrounding the school such as: the building design and location; the provision of natural light and adequate shade; the creation of space for physical activity and facilities for learning and healthy eating.

The finding of this study indicated that the accessibility of actual physical schools' environment in both Debeza and Neguse T/haymanot integrated primary schools related to routes to schools, entrance to schools, buildings, classrooms, and offices are not favorable for students with visual impairment. This finding was coincide with the finding by (Zulch, 2010, Tirusew & et al 2014, and Aderie, 2016) who found the same result. On the other hand, information related to Braille and International Symbol is not totally available in any single school. Hence, students with visual impairments lack much information due to lack of clear directory and clear information to navigate from place to place without difficulty or confusion. This finding was in line with the finding of Adrie (2016) which find the same result. Thus, this situation contributes for dependence of students with visual impairments on others to move and locate important places in the schools.

Practices of Assessment and Evaluation

In terms of academic assessment, the finding of this study indicated that the same academic assessment and evaluation methods and examination principles were used by teachers for students with visual impairment with their sighted peers.

The findings of this study from those key informants indicated that assignments were given to students with visual impairment to be worked on in groups as well as individually. In group assignments, students with visual impairment did not face serious challenges. In these group tasks,

students with visual impairment themselves and SNE teachers claimed that students with visual impairment are actively participated in the contribution of ideas.

This finding differ with the finding of Yohanes (2016) conducted in Ethiopia universities. He pointed out that the majority of the teachers /instructors in two universities used alternative assessment methods to minimize the challenges faced by students with visual impairment in group and individual assignments. This study further revealed that students with visual impairments have faced difficulties in examination format and the place they took exams and tests. This finding is consistent with the finding by Yohannes (2016) which argued that the exam formant and venue which students with visual impairment took is inappropriate.

All these challenges had a negative impact on the academic performance of students with visual impairment. Therefore, it is time for integrated primary schools in DebreMarkos town to give due attention to the challenges students with visual impairment face in assessment activities and consider ways of changing the situation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and the analysis of the study the following conclusions have been drawn:

Availability of trained teachers in special needs education (SNE) is essential factor to promote the integration of Students with Visual Impairment with other students. Training of teachers in SNE enabled them to acquire skills and knowledge to support students with visual impairment. This factor contributed strongly towards successful integration of Students with Visual Impairment with other students in those integrated primary schools. But in the selected schools students were suffered with the problems like lack of resources and special equipment, resource personnel and support services, physical environment of the school, material adaption problems and assessment and evaluation methods were the major problems.

Even if the qualified teachers is very important for teaching Students with Visual Impairment. But teachers in Dibza and Nigus/T haymanot were not qualified in SNE and cannot communicate with those students this make teachers suffer with lack of knowledge & skill handling Students with Visual Impairment was a major factor.

The teaching and learning approaches teachers used in the classroom was also found to be insufficiently inclusive and often did not meet the needs of Students with Visual Impairment and there is no coordination between professionals, special needs educators and the regular school teachers to create conducive environment for integrated education.

Assessment and evaluationpractices that Students with Visual Impairment experienced were full of challenges. The quality of support from regular teachers, special educators, professionals, the school administrators and educational offices is insignificant forStudents with Visual Impairment.The physical accessibility of the school, issue related to routes to schools, entrance to schools, buildings, classrooms, path ways and offices are inaccessible to Students with Visual Impairment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and the analysis of the study the following conclusions have been forwarded:

Integrated schools teachers and principals should assisted to hold in-service programmers and workshops at cluster level to equip them with various approaches in handling the students with visual impairment.

Regular, SNE teachers, sighted students should be exposed to braille reading and writing training in order to establish communication between them.

Principals of the Schools should mobilize solicit funds to ensure all the necessary equipment and materials and A resource room should be established and equipped with modern teaching equipment.

The school shouldprovide resource personnel in the area of orientation and mobility training for students with visual impairment.

Government should take into consideration to provide enough pre-service and in-service training in students with visual impairment education.

Government should provide enough resources and special equipment to these integrated schools, and to students with hearing& visual impairments in particular.

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